YOUR POST-CHRISTMAS SHOPPING GUIDE

WE ROUND UP THE BEST SALES STARTING DEC. 26. PAGE 08

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Wise young Owl

The Inspiration. Hip hop god Jeezy recently delivered a rousing locker room speech to the Temple University football squad. After Jeezy's pep talk, the Owls went on to secure a historic win. PAGE 02

The Owls sing the school fight song after beating the East Carolina Pirates on Nov. 1, following a visit from rapper Jeezy. / GETTY IMAGES

S. Philly firehouse's future unclear

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On the go

Want to read Metro on your mobile device? Get the app! All you have to do is search for Metro US in the App Store or Google Play to get all the latest in news, sports, lifestyle and entertainment for free.

Rapper Jeezy confesses to be secret Temple fan

Good rap. Famed hip-hop artist Jeezy fires up Temple football Owls before their games.

Jeezy with the Temple Owls. / @YOUNGGJEEZY/INSTAGRAM

Now that Bill Cosby will no longer roam the Temple sidelines, the Owls need a new high profile face. Could it be Jeezy's grinning mug taking over for the embattled Cheltenham-based comic?

"I don't know about that (replacing Cosby) but I do know I support the Temple football team," Jeezy said while calling from Atlanta. "I completely back them."

Jeezy, 37, formerly know as Young Jeezy aka Jay Wayne Jenkins, might not be young anymore (though he is 40 years behind Cosby) however, the intense rapper is still inspirational. LeBron James, Carmelo Anthony and Ricky Rubio have said the hip-hop sensation's anthemic jams help take them to another place on the court.

Now, Jeezy has become the recording artist of choice for the Temple Owls football team, a squad that's been struggling since the Knute Rockne era.

Jeezy, who has recorded such soaring chart-toppers as "Sole Survivor," "I Luv It" and "Go Getta," shocked the Owls before the team faced 23rd ranked East Carolina University in early November when he gave a motivational speech.

Quoted

"If I can make it (to a bowl game), I'll be there."

Jeezy

"The coach asked me to come in because they all work out to my music," Jeezy said of Temple head coach Matt Rhule. "They couldn't believe it was me they were seeing. It was so cool."

Jeezy rocked Owls jersey number 87, while giving a rousing talk about success and failure. The fired up Owls proceeded to upset ECU in their first ever win over a ranked opponent.

"It was awesome to have somebody that could just say to them, 'whether you like my music or not, who I am or not, there's two imposters in life, success and failure and you just have to fight through adversity,'" said Ruhle. "I say that every day to our team and he said it and they were like, 'that's good stuff right there."

The Owls finished on a winning note to improve their record to 6-6 but they weren't invited to a bowl game, even though Rhule's squad was eligible. There's always next year.

ED CONDRAN
Special to Metro
letters@metro.us

Visit **Metro.us** to read more about the rapper's affinity for Philly.

Quoted

"Well, we aren't the best at sports, so I think he picked the wrong school to support."

Jim O'Connor, Junior

"I think we will be proud, and can say to Penn or Drexel students that Young Jeezy likes us and not you guys. We like to brag."

Mo Abdul, Junior, rows Crew

Support. Vigil held for lone Montco shooting survivor

Anthony Flick and Nina Flick / FACEBOOK

A vigil was held Monday at the Souderton Area High School to support the recovery of Anthony Flick, 17, the lone survivor of gunman Bradley William Stone's Dec. 15 rampage, as well as to remember his sister, Nina, 14.

"He is in good spirits and will be OK," organizer Melissa Mecca said of Anthony's condition.

Mecca and other friends have set up a GoFundMe page to raise money for Anthony and for the funerals of his parents and sister.

The effort has raised almost $27,000 in one week.

Stone, a troubled Iraq veteran, killed six members of his ex-wife's family — including her sister, Patricia Flick, her husband, Aaron, and their daughter, in a child custody dispute.

His own two daughters, aged 5 and 8, were unharmed.

Anthony reportedly sustained a skull fracture and three severed fingers but survived.

Stone was found dead in the woods a day later. The cause has not been determined.

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Philadelphia police walk among the public on patrol. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER, METRO

NYC cop murders put Philly police risks in spotlight

Danger. Local police public relations seem stable despite Brooklyn double murder.

Days after two police officers were shot dead in Brooklyn, Philadelphia has seen no significant new threats of violence made against police, said a department spokesman, Lt. John Stanford.

"We haven't had anything major in terms of negativity," said Stanford. "It seems like we've had more responses from people saying, 'I support you guys.'"

On Friday night, before the New York shootings carried out by Ismaaiyl Brinsley, a reportedly mentally ill Baltimore man who shot his ex-girlfriend earlier that day, several hundred people rallied in support of Philadelphia cops in Northeast Philly's Mayfair neighborhood.

Stanford said the PPD isn't more worried about danger now than usual.

"This job is crazy every day," he said. "You have to worry about officer safety every day."

Local activist Daryle Lamont Jenkins said nationwide protests calling for justice for unarmed black men killed by police have contributed to an anti-cop climate in Philadelphia.

"We've been lucky in Philly because we haven't had anybody get killed," Jenkins said, referring specifically to the deaths of unarmed suspects. "But what happens when it does go down? Notice that I say 'when.'"

Some locals think no such violence will come to Philly.

"Not in Philadelphia. I don't feel that feeling in the air," said Pierre Gaston, 33, of Olney. "But cops should be aware, even though it hasn't happened in Philly."

But others say they feel anti-cop sentiment in Philly.

"People think that cops use their badges for their own advantage, and they might start a riot or end up killing officers," said Zakiya Shepherd, 15, from North Philly.

Gary Dillard, 58, said he believes tension from the Eric Garner and Michael Brown nonindictments led to the murders in Brooklyn.

"It's not right, but when you start something — and then are letting them people off — there's a justification," he said. "It's gonna continue until they do something."

Officers Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu were the first NYPD officers killed in the line of duty since 2011.

Is the PPD in danger?

"Not in Philadelphia. I don't feel that feeling in the air. ... But cops should be aware, even though it hasn't happened in Philly."

Pierre Gaston, 33, of Olney

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Crime

Murder rate down but may exceed 2013

With nine days left in 2014, Philadelphia has a chance — a thin one — of having a lower murder count than in 2013. There were 247 murders in 2013, the fewest since 1968. That's down 25 percent from 331 murders in 2012. But as of Dec. 21, there have been 245 murders, according to Philadelphia Police Department stats. Just two more murders before New Year's Day would halt the decline.

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L&I indifference imperils beloved 120-year-old Pennsport firehouse

Engine 46. It's unclear if an historic firehouse faces demolition or development.

The crenellated tower of the Engine 46 firehouse stands like a beacon tucked between I-95 and Columbus Avenue in Pennsport. The Flemish Revival firehouse, built in 1894 and appearing to be in fine shape, seems to have lost its chance for landmarking as the Philadelphia's Dept. of Licensing and Inspections keeps open a demolition permit in an apparent violation of city rules.

Nearly two years after Cedar Realty Trust and its CEO, Bruce Schanzer, received a demolition permit, the former firehouse is still empty even though the rules under which it was issued say that if work is suspended for 180 days or more, the permit expires.

L&I's Director of Development, Elizabeth Baldwin, says the demo work has been "progressing slowly in the interior," and says the department has "no evidence that it has been inactive for six months."

Baldwin says that even the smallest amount of work would satisfy L&I's requirement that any destruction be continuous for the permit to remain valid. Under the state Uniform Construction Code, demo permits are limited to five years.

The zombie permit has left preservationists angered. While an approved demolition permit is in place, rules prevent the firehouse from being placed on Philadelphia's Register of Historic Places.

The Engine 46 firehouse in South Philadelphia. /HILLARY PETROZZIELLO

Quoted

"We don't know if they think we're hostile — we're certainly not. We'd do whatever we can to help them." Leech

Benjamin Leech, director of advocacy for the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia says he hopes that simply by dint of the fact that the castle-like structure still stands, Cedar Realty is still attempting to sell or lease the old firehouse. But he doesn't know for sure. "We've tried to contact them," he said. But "they haven't gotten back to us."

Metro's calls to Cedar Realty Trust for comment went unanswered.

The building has sat unoccupied since 2006, when a steakhouse there closed.

On Cedar Realty's website, a flyer for Riverview Plaza, describes Engine 46 as an available property, number 6 on the accompanying plans, with a lot size of 1,053 square feet. The only photos of Riverview are of the movie theater and its parking lot. There are no pictures of the iconic turret or the rich red brick, and no prices are listed.

The best hope for preserving the firehouse intact is to see it recycled as a new restaurant or bar. Next door, Warmdaddy's has been serving soul food for the last eight years, and the Industry and Moonshine have opened up just blocks away in recent years.

Cedar Realty has maintained the property and paid its taxes in full, leaving preservationists with little leverage.

As long as the city continues to reissue the demolition permit, there's not much that can be done to preserve the firehouse, says Leech, beyond "political pressure and public opinion."

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Starting Dec. 26, it's back to the stores! / GETTY IMAGES

The biggest sales after Christmas

Shopping. Find out what to buy and where the deals are, starting Dec. 26.

If you don't get everything your heart desires for Christmas or you are meeting up with loved ones in a couple weeks and still haven't bought their gifts, waiting a bit longer just might pay off for you — literally. Some items, like clothes, are cheapest right after the holidays, with many stores offering steep discounts starting Dec. 26. Here are a couple key items worth waiting for:

Home decor

West Elm and Crate and Barrel are putting all the holiday-related items on clearance, but discounts won't just be limited to everything red and green. Dealnews.com reports that both stores are debuting new furniture collections at the beginning of the new year, which means they'll be marking down their 2014 furniture collections.

Clothes

Retailers will desperately be trying to get shoppers back in their stores after Christmas, luring them in with big discounts, especially on winter-specific items like coats and sweaters. Winter accessories like scarves and gloves are sure to be steeply discounted, and there's still plenty of cold weather left to get good use out of them. Stores like Old Navy, Gap and Banana Republic are best to hit Dec. 26, while department stores like Macy's and JCPenney will have deals going on through January.

Big-screens on sale

TVs

If you don't get that TV you wanted for Christmas on Thursday, you can take advantage of Samsung's sweet deals: They'll be offering up to 45 percent off throughout January and February. Just go to Coupons.com for the special code.

Boots

Similarly, shoe stores will be looking to clear the shelves of boots to make way for new styles hitting in January. Traditionally, Payless and DSW offer big post-Christmas sales, giving shoppers an extra discount on top of clearance prices, so it would be a good idea to head to these stores first.

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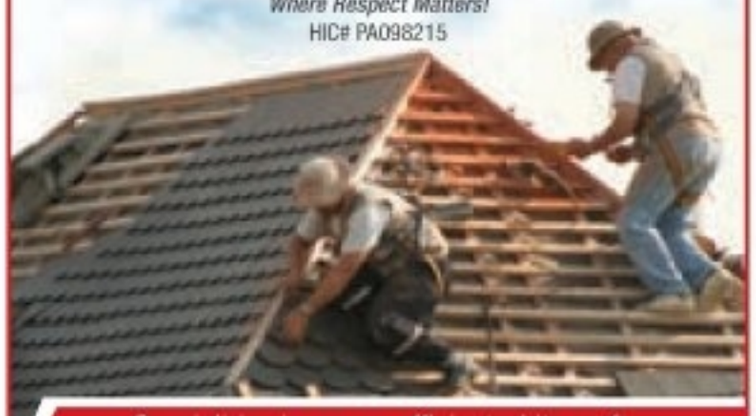

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Timothy Sykes is a millionaire stock trader and entrepreneur.

New Year's resolutions I'm making

This was my most successful year as a stock trader and teacher, but I'm always striving to be better. Here are my three New Year's resolutions for 2015:

Resolution No. 1: Be healthier

In the past 12 months, my business reached new heights, I started a new serious relationship and the press started hounding me daily after my second millionaire student went viral on Fox & CNN. While all of that was going on, I was still determined to indulge in my passion for exotic travel. Through all of this, my health declined as I didn't make enough time for cardio or working out. Given that I gained nearly 50 pounds in the past year, I joke around that I'm a less-funny Jonah Hill, but I must take my health much more seriously in 2015, as no amount of personal and business success means much if I'm not around to enjoy it all.

Resolution No. 2: Give back

In the past, I've always donated my time and money to worthy causes, but this past year I just didn't make the time. But I'm already making up for it. In the past week, I sponsored a Make-A-Wish Foundation wish for a young basketball fan and surprised him with season tickets. I also dressed up as Hanukkah Harry to deliver toys and presents to more than 100 kids at my local Boys & Girls Club. It's a good start, but I must be more diligent in helping those less fortunate.

Resolution No. 3: Cherish my friends

Besides gaining too much weight and ignoring my community, I didn't place enough importance on my friendships with several of my best friends. As I've gotten older, it's become tougher to keep up with my friends. In 2015, this will change as I truly miss them.

I've had a ton of success in the past year, but I've done a poor job at managing my time, health and several important relationships. I know exactly what I must do in the new year. Do you? Make a list and get to it!

Props to Sony for placing the safety and well being of our citizens ahead of everything else in the face of hacker threats over "The Interview." We'll watch it On Demand later!

"Thursday Night Football Saturday Edition": C'mon, NFL. You really can't come up with a better name than that?

For exclusive commentary, visit **Metro.us/blogs.**

What Sykes is into this week ...

1

I loved the new Dr. Evil video mocking North Korea and the entire hacker situation. Good job, "Saturday Night Live"!

2

Tom Brokaw says his cancer is in remission — great news!

3

I've heard the final chapter in "The Hobbit" movie trilogy is pretty good, thankfully. The past two movies have been less than solid.

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Holland America Line — 7-Day Europe $789* (Ocean View $1089* / Balcony $1089*)

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2

CULTURE

Twitter feed

Today, Ricky Gervais has well-researched opinions, Forest Whitaker is expecting a lot from you, Pam Grier is showing her out-of-town guests a good time, Miles Teller wishes more people would take his word for things and Jaden Smith thinks he's in on the joke.

@rickygervais: 88% of Twitter users take jokes and statistics way too seriously.

@ForestWhitaker: Each one of us can play our part in shaping the future. Each one of us has the power to make an enormous contribution to the world.

@PamGrier: Friends from Japan came to Ski! Looking to sight Quentin Tarantino, Kurt Russell in Aspen!

@Miles_Teller: I saw Ryan Adams a couple days ago, he was awesome and I had a great time, but I forgot to snapchat it so nobody will believe me

@officialjaden: I Just Scrolled Through My Tweets And "I" Started Laughing.

1 Mel B's recent hospitalization? An accidental overdose.

Last week, former Spice Girl Mel B (real name Melanie Brown) missed a taping of the British version of "X Factor" after heading to the hospital because of stomach pains. But now it turns out that was a bit of a fib. A source tell Radar Online that Brown "was hospitalized because she mixed tranquillizers, including Xanax, with alcohol. It was absolutely accidental and not intentional. She wasn't suicidal, but the pressure of being back in London brought a lot of unresolved issues to the surface concerning being estranged from her mother, Andrea, and the rest of her family." Dang, source, ease up with the oversharing. You could've just left it at "not intentional." Brown has reportedly been holed up in a London hotel with her daughters since leaving the hospital and has been cleared by doctors to return to the U.S.

GETTY IMAGES

2 Laverne Cox flips out over Beyonce Christmas card

"Orange Is the New Black" star Laverne Cox totally wins the relatability award this year for her perfectly measured and understandable reaction to receiving a Christmas card from Beyonce. I mean, it's a Christmas card from Beyonce. Cox posted a shot of the signature to Instagram, explaining, "So when I opened this holiday card a few days ago and read 'Love Beyonce,' I literally fell to the floor. I was on the floor of my apartment. I have witnesses." Don't worry, we believe you.

She also writes, "Thanks Bey for the gift" and includes an image of a sweatshirt emblazoned with "Cake by the Pound." It's unclear whether the item is said gift — I mean, it would make sense, right? — but the important thing is, I would like to know more about this cake-by-the-pound policy. Where do I sign up?

INSTAGRAM, LAVERNECOX

3 Surprise 'Hannibal' cast shake-up is surprising

Michael Pitt is evidently all done with "Hannibal" and won't be returning for the show's third season, but that doesn't mark the end of his character, meat-packing magnate Mason Verger. Pitt will be replaced by "Across the Universe" star Joe Anderson, and hopefully fans won't notice the difference. I mean, he ended Season 2 doing some pretty grisly things to his own face, meaning lots of stomach-turning prosthetics, so it just might work. Sources say Pitt made the decision to leave the show, probably seeing his character's intense facial mutilation as the perfect opportunity to do so.

Oh, and Anderson posted a pretty alarming photo of himself in full Verger makeup on the character's Instagram account, and now we kind of see Pitt's point.

Goodbye, Michael Pitt's mangled face. Hello, Joe Anderson's.
NBC, NBCU PHOTO BANK

4 'Anger Management' apparently only gets 100 episodes

Last night's "Anger Management" finale, it turns out, was the series finale. Charlie Sheen's post-"Two and a Half Men" project is all done, as cast and crew were informed late last week by FX and Lionsgate that the show would not be renewed. "I am beyond proud of what we accomplished over the course of 100 episodes," Sheen says in a statement. "We created something uniquely special with some of the most talented individuals I have ever had the privilege to work with. My sincere thanks to all for their unwavering love and support. Here's to the next chapter."

The network brass informed the team Friday, ahead of Monday's 100th episode debut, which certainly put a damper on the celebrations. The series was kicked off in an unusual manner, with Sheen orchestrating a deal with the network where he made 10 episodes and if they liked them, they had to order a minimum of 90 more, instantly triggering a syndication deal and resulting in an often draining production schedule for those involved. Up next for Sheen? Reprising his "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" character for a cameo on "The Goldbergs."

Here's post-"Anger Management" Sheen portraying pre-"Anger Management" Sheen from "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" in a cameo on "The Goldbergs." / ABC VIA GETTY IMAGES

THE WORD

Ned Ehrbar takes on the world of gossip.

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Daily video

VIMEO, ITV PRESS CENTRE

Watch George Clooney on 'Downton Abbey'

Remember all that talk about George Clooney making an appearance on "Downton Abbey"? Well, here it is. Clooney gets in on the action for the series' Christmas comedy bit made for the ITV network's annual charity drive, featuring the hit British show getting the "It's a Wonderful Life" treatment as Lord Grantham (Hugh Bonneville) frets about how he's ruined the family finances. "Absolutely Fabulous" star Joanna Lumley plays his guardian angel, and Clooney pops up as George Oceans Gravity, Marquess of Hollywood, the PDA-happy guy Cora (Elizabeth McGovern) ended up with since Lord Grantham had never been born. Let's just say he might've been on to something.

TV watch list

DRAMA

'Girlfriends' Guide to Divorce'

Abby continues testing the dating waters by going out with a married guy, while "Orange Is the New Black" actress Laverne Cox stops by for a guest-starring role. **10 P.M., BRAVO**

Abby's life seems OK if she gets to hang out with Janeane Garofalo at a fancy dinner. / SERGEI BACHLAKOV, BRAVO

REALITY

'Chopped'

The show tries out an all-family edition, as a mother, father, daughter and son who run a restaurant together compete in challenges involving deboning fish and making flavorful tofu. **10 P.M., FOOD NETWORK**

COMEDY

'Benched'

Nina learns the DA plans to arrest the city's homeless, but isn't sure what to do about it; then, in the second of two episodes airing tonight, she decides whether or not to set Phil up with a friend. **10 P.M., USA**

MOVIE

'Ocean's Eleven'

Refresh your George Clooney crush by watching this casino-heist movie, which also features Brad Pitt eating snacks in almost every scene for some reason. **8 P.M., E!**

LISA WEIDENFELD

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- Ability to work in inclement weather on any assigned shift including weekends, holidays

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Best places to spend New Year's Eve

Where's the most festive place to be when the clock strikes midnight on Dec. 31? We scoured the world for the best NYE celebrations, from the beaches of Rio de Janeiro to the Las Vegas Strip.

5 PLUS

Las Vegas

More than 300,000 revelers descend on this party capital for the big night, when the Las Vegas Strip becomes car-free and turns into a giant street party with live bands, pyrotechnic displays and laser shows. The city also hosts a mind-boggling number of concerts, shows and parties. At midnight, fireworks go off from seven rooftops along the Strip.

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Fodor's Travel

4 New York City

A million people gather in Times Square to watch a 12-foot-wide crystal ball weighing nearly 12,000 pounds drop atop One Times Square. For a slightly less chaotic experience, book a reservation at one of the restaurants overlooking Times Square. Or consider a nighttime boat ride on New York Harbor, which offers the best views of the midnight fireworks display on Liberty Island.

3 Rio de Janeiro

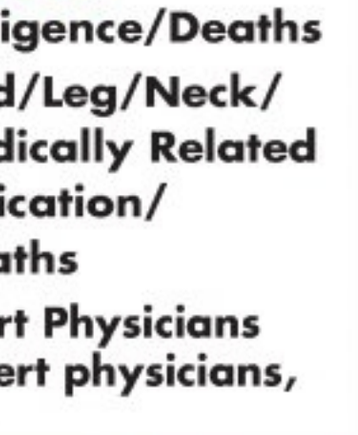
Rio's Copacabana Beach hosts the world's largest and arguably wildest New Year's Eve party, with more than 2 million people cramming onto the 2.5-mile stretch of sand. Locals dress head to toe in white — believed to bring good luck— and toss handfuls of flowers into the ocean as gift to Yemanja, goddess of the seas. The celebration also includes live music, dance performances and fireworks.

2 Edinburgh, Scotland

Annual New Year's festivities in Edinburgh actually span three days. Things kick off Dec. 30 with a torchlight procession through the city that culminates in a fireworks finale. New Year's Eve is all about massive street parties and outdoor concerts. At midnight, 4.5 tons of fireworks explode over Edinburgh Castle. On New Year's Day, enjoy the competitive dog sledding across Holyrood Park, see brave souls jump into the ice-cold waters of the River Forth at the conclusion of the Loony Dook parade (a charity event), and check out Scot:Lands, a multi-venue music and arts festival.

1 London

Londoners ring in the New Year to the chiming of Big Ben at midnight. More than 250,000 people crowd the banks of the Thames and its bridges to see the spectacular light show and fireworks display, with the London Eye, the Houses of Parliament and the new Shard highlights of the urban scenery. There are many after-parties, and on New Year's Day the streets of central London get a parade of floats, marching bands, costumed dancers and a procession of the Queen's horses.



ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

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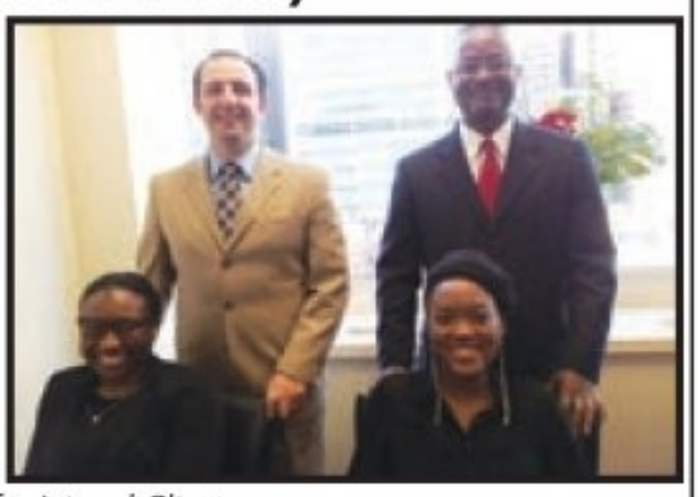

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Best parenting moments of 2014

These four stories will inspire you.

EMILY LAURENCE

Amazing 'Spider-Dad' gives his terminally ill son the best birthday surprise ever

FACEBOOK, BEAU COFFRON

When Mike Wilson's son Jayden was diagnosed with brain cancer, doctors only gave him a year to live. It had been a tough year for the whole family, but Wilson didn't want his son to feel a drop of sadness on his 5th birthday. So he gave him the best surprise ever: He surprised Jayden as his favorite superhero, Spider-Man.

FACEBOOK, WCVB-TV

Mom saves son from fire

When 23-year-old mother Christina Simoes and her 18-month-old son were trapped on the third floor of their burning apartment building, she knew the only way out for them was through the window. Simoes cradled her son in her arms and jumped out the window, landing on her back. Her instinct was to protect her son, no matter what it meant for her.

Due to the fall, Simoes is suffering severe nerve damage and might never walk again. After falling, she lost all the feeling in her legs. She's currently in recovery; her son, however, is completely fine.

Dad goes above and beyond with packing lunch, every day

YOUTUBE, BEAU CAFFRON

Packing kids' school lunches is an annoying chore for some parents, but Beau Coffron consistently makes his daughter Instagram-worthy lunches day after day, earning him the moniker "Lunchbox Dad." Sometimes, being the best parent ever really is about the little things.

births
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In 1995 we announced the arriva
of our sprogget, Elizabeth Anne, a
a daughter. He informs us that w
were mistaken. Oops! Our ba
We would now like to present, ou
wonderful son - Kai Bogert.
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the world. Tidy your room.

TWITTER, @FROSTYAGNES

Parents release new birth announcement for transgender teen

For a teen, telling your parents you're transitioning genders can be terrifying. And for parents, it can be confusing and even sad. But two parents showed their support in a huge way, by running a new "birth" announcement in their local paper:

"In 1995 we announced the arrival of our sprogget, Elizabeth Anne, as a daughter. He informs us that we were mistaken. Oops! Our bad. We would now like to present, our wonderful son — Kai Bogert. Loving you is the easiest thing in the world. Tidy your room."

Their example shows how being a parent means loving your child through everything, no matter what.

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Best of 2014

Through the holidays, Metro takes a look at the issues important to letter writers in 2014. Whether it was gun violence, domestic violence, world conflicts — or cyclists! — Metro readers had a lot to say. Here are some excerpts:

'Illegal immigrants'

There always have been and always will be immigration LAWS. And they are meant to be restrictive. All countries do this, to protect their own citizens/country from being overrun. One must follow the LAWS or be thrown out. And please don't use that tired old statement about the illegals taking unwanted jobs.
MARIL GOSNIK (JULY 31)

I want to urge that we do seek comprehensive reform on immigration and advocate for executive action if Congress will not comply. Since when did we as Americans forget about the human dignity documented and undocumented people deserve? We cannot reject the thousands of women and children arriving at our border seeking amnesty.
CHARLES HAJJAR (NOV. 21)

Give 'em hell, Mr. President! He did what he had to do, since the Republican House was unwilling or unable to do anything. This whole sordid saga reinforces the old adage, "Those who can, do; those who can't, bitch" — which is what the Republicans will do for the rest of the year — and then some.
RICHARD ZIEGENFUSS (NOV. 24)

Yesterday's answer

EVERYONE IS ON THE NAUGHTY LIST

Opinion

TOM FOREMAN
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT FOR CNN

The icy wind howls, the reindeer paw and still Santa sits with his head in his hands. The elves eye him warily, and Mrs. Claus twists her apron. "Look, Nick," she says, "everything is ready. You've got to go. That's what the contract says, and if you think I'm going to give up this great place for an early retirement in Naples, Florida, you're crazy."

"But everyone is being so naughty," he wails. "Honestly, if I loaded the sleigh with gifts for only those who are truly good, I'd have room for the New Jersey governor to ride along. Have you seen what is happening in the news lately?"

"Yes, world markets in turmoil, terrorism, racial and religious divides," she admits. "And now we can't even go see 'The Interview' on Christmas afternoon. But what exactly has you upset?"

"Well, that's a good example," Santa says. "I was looking forward to that movie, and now we have this whole hacking mess, the corporate guys are being as spineless as snowmen, and Kim Jong-un is acting like a big baby. How can I not be depressed?"

Mrs. Klaus shakes her head. "Just give them all lumps of coal. By the way, what do you suppose really got him so pissed at Sony? I can't imagine it was simply a movie."

"I think it may be my fault. He was already on the naughty list last year so I didn't give him what he wanted."

"What was that?"

"A PlayStation 4."

"Could be. But that still doesn't justify him threatening Seth Rogen and his little friends, does it?"

"No, but you see how complicated it gets."

"Of course." Mrs. Claus eases him to his feet, hands him his hat, and guides him out the door. "But that's why you're Santa Claus; because you know how to sort this all out. Now go make the world a happier place. Maybe when you get home we can see 'American Sniper'!"

"You're just trying to cheer me up," he says, climbing aboard and taking the reins.

"Yes, I am, dearie. But that's what Christmas is all about."

CNN=POLITICS

Sudoku: Easy and hard

3	7						6	
		6	8	5			4	
		8		7	6			1
4	5				9	1		
				3				
		3	4				8	5
5			7	2		8		
	1			6	8	9		
	6						2	7

3	7						6	
		6	8	5			4	
		8		7	6			1
4	5				9	1		
				3				
		3	4				8	5
5			7	2		8		
	1			6	8	9		
	6						2	7

How to play
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Horoscope

♑ Capricorn | Dec. 22-Jan. 20. Make a point to network and keep in touch with important people. Offer assistance to a close friend or relative. A secret will give you insight that will help you make a big decision.

♒ Aquarius | Jan. 21-Feb. 18. You'll feel apprehensive about getting together with old friends. Stop having regrets about your past. People love you for who you are. Stand tall.

♓ Pisces | Feb. 19-March 20. Not everything will go according to plan. You will have to take things as they come. If you don't overreact to minor matters, you will avoid retaliation.

♈ Aries | March 21-April 20. You will find the perfect gift for someone special. Don't waste time asking for other people's opinions. Rely on your own judgment for the most success and satisfaction.

♉ Taurus | April 21-May 21. Don't worry if you can't complete your whole shopping list. It's not about how much you give or spend, it's about the love and sincerity that you offer.

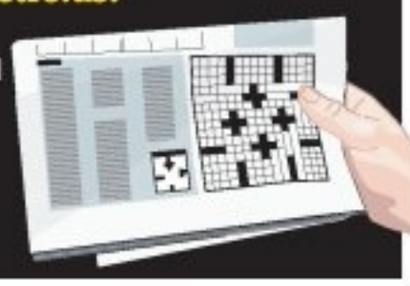
♊ Gemini | May 22-June 20. A blossoming partnership will bring you happiness. You will be greatly appreciated if you use your unique talents to make family gatherings a big hit.

♋ Cancer | June 21-July 22. You will leave a lasting impression if you devote your time to someone elderly or lonely. Before you travel, finish your chores so you will not have to deal with such matters when you return.

♌ Leo | July 23-Aug. 22. Generosity at this time of year is not about spending money. You will grab attention if you contribute your ideas, time and effort to a cause you believe in.

♍ Virgo | Aug. 23-Sept. 22. All the hustle and bustle will try your patience. Short tempers can lead to hurtful arguments, so it's wise to go off by yourself, where you can reflect.

Visit us online at **Metro.us.**
Use your smartphone to find today's crossword answers! Download and open the Blippar app on your smartphone and hold the screen over the puzzle.



♎ Libra | Sept. 23-Oct. 22. Your charisma and charm will make you the center of attention. Host a family party or neighborhood gathering. You have the ability to make everyone feel important and at ease.

♏ Scorpio | Oct. 23-Nov. 21. Now is a great time to reconnect with people you don't see often. Get out and socialize as much as you can, but take care not to overindulge.

♐ Sagittarius | Nov. 22-Dec. 21. Family dynamics will become strained if you put demands on the ones you love. Sightseeing will take your mind off troublesome situations at home or work.
EUGENIA LAST

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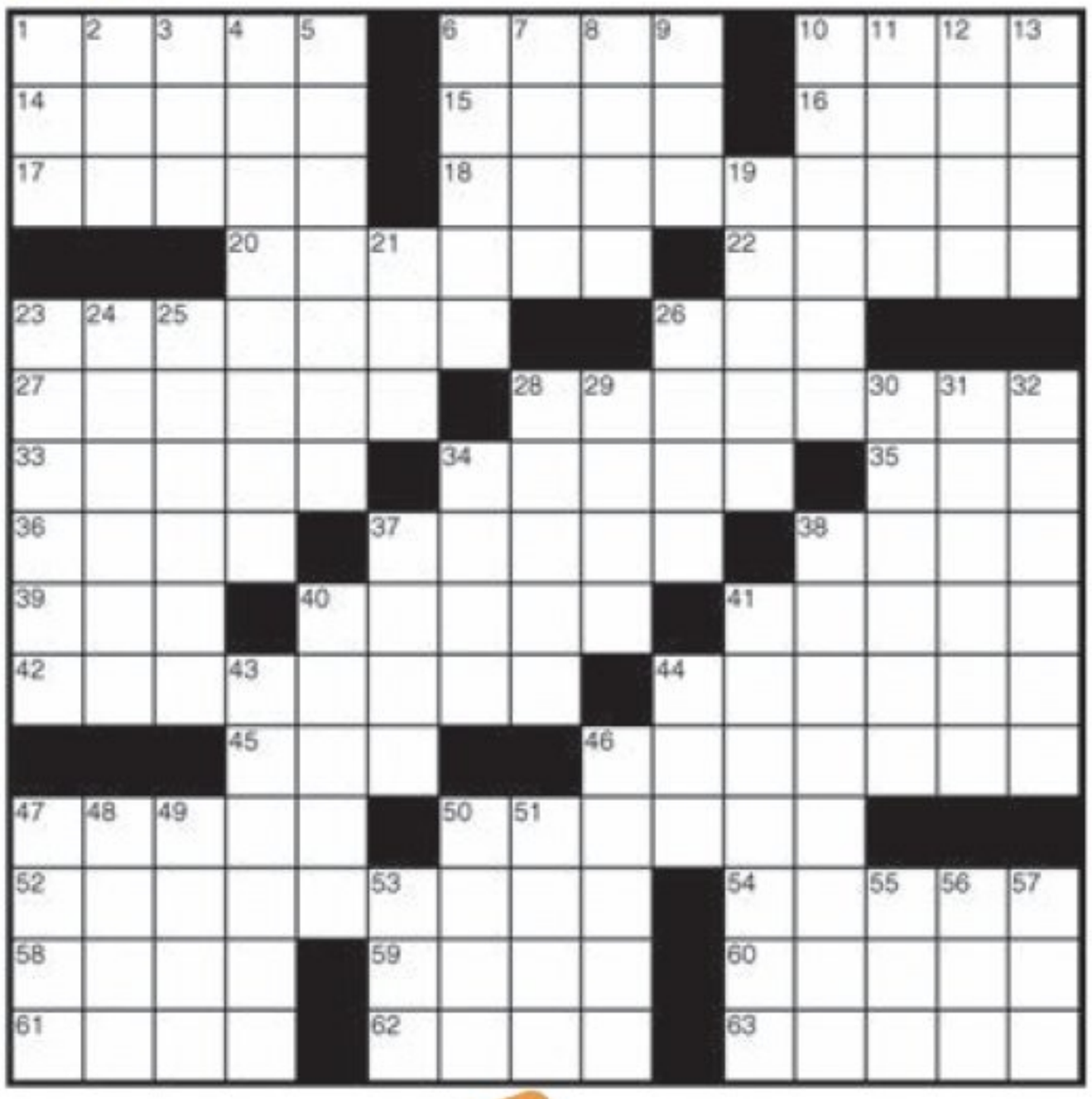

Across

1 Kind of coverage
6 Mete out
10 Territory
14 "Then — will guide the planets ..."
15 Deep black
16 Statuesque model
17 Four-bagger
18 Arrow launcher
20 Fritters away
22 Cast member
23 Beethoven pieces
26 Sgt.'s status
27 Walking on air
28 Gazed into the sun
33 Bordered
34 Frighten
35 66, e.g.
36 Pole on a ship
37 Platter players (hyph.)
38 Interval
39 Aleta's son
40 Like mud on cleats
41 Make-shift
42 Fuzzier
44 Sporty cars
45 Hearing aid?
46 Most gloomy
47 "Mission" starter
50 Tiara
52 Galvanized
54 Veins of ore
58 Post-kindergarten
59 Livy's year
60 Radius companions
61 Faint, with "over"
62 Latin I verb
63 Site

Down

1 Radar-gun info
2 Want-ad letters
3 Block, as a stream
4 Restaurant freebie (2 wds.)
5 Filled with fizz
6 Sums owed
7 Clarinet's kin
8 Wall Street stats
9 Jr. naval officer
10 Diamond-like gem
11 Jump over
12 Billionth, in combos
13 Amtrak driver
19 Unstated
21 Crestfallen
23 Vacillate
24 Seasoned vet (2 wds.)
25 1998 Winter Olympics host
26 Cell habitants
28 Less risky
29 Tobacco chew
30 Company
31 Chopin wrote dozens
32 Loathe
34 Netherlands sight
37 Kojak's lack
38 Arbiter of fashion Beau —
40 Join, as hands
41 Arises (2 wds.)
43 Soup legume
44 Spanish hero El —
46 Willem in "Platoon"
47 Journey
48 Bylaw
49 Queens' — Stadium
50 Puts on
51 Charged particles
53 Funny Charlotte —
55 Santa — winds
56 Laird's prefix
57 Compass pt.

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3 SPORTS

Hot stove update

Latest Hamels rumor involves Padres

It's nearly 2015 and the Phillies still have their most valuable asset on the roster — 30-year-old ace Cole Hamels. With rumors circling Hamels' future all offseason, the latest musing is one that sounds viable for the Phillies. San Diego has been active this fall and winter, and has an over-abundance of outfield talent. The Phillies need outfielders, need youth and are seeking a top-flight talent. Philly.com's Ryan Lawrence reported this week that the Padres and Phillies had discussed the possibility of trading Hamels for Wil Myers, Baseball America's No. 4 prospect in baseball. The deal makes sense, but remains a rumor.

HOW JACKSON RUINED THE EAGLES SEASON

DeSean Jackson is one of the most outrageous and obnoxious athletes ever to wear a Philadelphia uniform, a shameless fool whose primary goal on a football field is to glorify himself and denigrate everybody else. His act is so disgusting, he was released by the Eagles after making the Pro Bowl last season.

And now, forevermore, Eagles fans will look back on 2014 as the season Jackson ruined, thanks to Chip Kelly. The unorthodox coach had good reason to remove Jackson from the roster last winter, but with it came a responsibility to his team and the fans to make certain Jackson didn't do exactly what he did in Washington's 27-24 season-killer.

Now, technically, defensive coordinator Billy Davis had the job of devising a strategy to stop Jackson, but Kelly needed to stress, unequivocally, that the speedy receiver could not be given a chance to beat his former team with big plays. After all, Dez Bryant had already burned the defense on deep balls a week earlier for Dallas.

Instead, against all basic football logic, Davis and Kelly allowed Jackson to race past an unassisted

Ironically, it can be argued Jackson ended the Eagles' season. / GETTY IMAGES

Cataldi's final thought

"It wasn't enough of an insult losing the last hope of the 2014 season to the Redskins. Now we also have to live with the fact that the Eagles gave one of the biggest jackasses in sports a merry Christmas in the process."

The voice of Philly sports

ANGELO CATALDI
SPORTS@METRO.US

Fletcher for two fatal bombs of 51 and 55 yards. How could a coaching staff noted for its intelligence give up those plays to an offense depleted by injury and lacking any other serious deep threat? It doesn't make any sense.

Ironically, when the coaches finally adjusted to what every fan had been screaming about for weeks, Nate Allen intercepted a pass in double coverage against Jackson, and then, finally, Bradley Fletcher was benched at the very end of a lethal defeat.

Here's all you need to know about Fletcher in the past two weeks: His failure to cover the deep pattern cost the Eagles 35 points. There were three touchdowns by Bryant, and the two long balls to Jackson. On each play, Bradley was entrusted with single coverage.

After the game — and yesterday on my WIP show — Kelly downplayed the decision to dump Jackson and the impact the wide receiver had on the Eagles season. The coach has neither accepted the gravity of his first decision, nor acknowledged the illogical strategy on Saturday that amplified Jackson's contribution.

Much will be said in the months ahead about how a coach who was 16-4 in his previous 20 NFL games could suddenly lose three straight, including the defeat Saturday to a putrid Redskins team. What needs to be stated right now is that the honeymoon has officially ended for Kelly and this city, and he has Jackson to blame for that.

"Get the (bleep) Birds out of here," the loudmouth receiver screamed after the game. "Tell them good night. Toodle-oo. Bye-bye."

Cataldi's idle thoughts

- If you love Christmas miracles, consider this: Las Vegas gave the Phillies a 150 to 1 chance of winning the 2015 World Series, tied for worst in baseball. That means GM Ruben Amaro took the team from the top to the bottom in six seasons. And he's still here, doing the same job. If that's not a miracle, what is?

- New Jersey Gov. Chris

NEW JERSEY'S CHRISTIE IS A PROUD COWBOYS FAN.
GETTY IMAGES

Christie was sharing high-fives in the luxury box of Cowboys owner Jerry Jones during the Dallas win over the Eagles on Sunday night. Does Christie really believe his love for the Cowboys is going to help get him elected president? Here's a better question: Doesn't he know it's going to hurt?

- After the Flyers' 10th straight shootout loss last week — five this season — coach Craig Berube said the problem was mental. He's right. The organization hates the shootout, so they stupidly refuse to adjust to a rule in effect for nine years. Chairman Ed Snider is still waiting for leisure suits to come back in style.

- Carl Cheffers and his officiating crew worked two Eagles games this season, both losses. In those games, he called 19 penalties against the Birds and seven combined against Green Bay and Washington. Is anybody else getting the impression he doesn't like Philadelphia?

- Most general managers love great players and big wins. And then there's Sixers GM Sam Hinkie, who has a bizarre desire for second-round draft picks. He has acquired — ready for this? — seven in 2014 alone. I offer this information just in case you haven't shopped for him yet.

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Bariatric Surgeons (Left to right): Rohit Soans, MD; Tatyan M. Clarke, MD; Michael A. Edwards, MD, FACS

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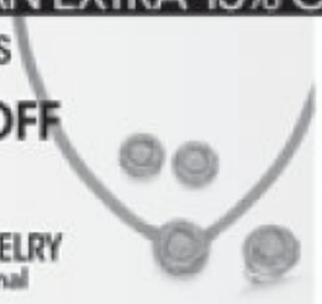

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